

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: The Clarinet Repertoire and Musical Aesthetic of
William Thomas McKinley

Melissa Morales, Doctor of Musical Arts, 2019

Dissertation directed by: Associate Professor of Clarinet, Robert DiLutis

The clarinet repertoire of William Thomas McKinley is varied and interesting, but seldom performed today. The few recordings that exist were created by an elite contingency of soloists and chamber musicians who were close friends and colleagues with McKinley. Outside their premieres and these few recordings, his music has seldom been performed. While many of his works are challenging and engaging, most were never published and thus remain inaccessible. Through several engraving projects and performances, this dissertation brings light to a corner of the clarinet repertoire seldom explored and heard today. For this project, I have completed performance editions of several McKinley works and presented them on recital. I plan to make the editions themselves available through later publication. This will make his music more accessible for performers and audiences alike. A recital on McKinley's influences, including Aaron Copland, Mel Powell, Gunther

Schuller, and Lukas Foss, took place on December 7, 2018 in Gildenhorn Recital Hall. The recital on April 19, 2019 in Leah Smith Recital Hall concentrated on McKinley's development and career trajectory, featuring *For One, Mostly Blues*, Two Romances for clarinet, violin, and piano, and Intermezzos No. 1 & 2. The final recital took place on May 4, 2019 in Ulrich Recital Hall and featured what could be considered his greatest works and clarinet duos, Clarinet Duets Book 1, Clarinet Concerto No. 2, and Clarinet Sonata. The recitals were recorded on compact discs and are archived within the Digital Repository at the University of Maryland (DRUM).

The Clarinet Repertoire and Musical Aesthetic
of William Thomas McKinley

by

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
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It would be shortsighted not to acknowledge the talent and efforts of the engravers who made these recitals possible. Joe Clark, Landon Hegedus, and Bryce Fuhrman went through arduous work deciphering the manuscripts to ensure a clean, and accurate copy of sheet music was produced.

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Chapter 1: Biographical Information

William Thomas “Tom” McKinley was a composer and jazz pianist who studied with and was mentored by some of the most prolific American composers in the twentieth century: Aaron Copland, Mel Powell, Gunther Schuller, and Lukas Foss. Throughout his extensive and diverse body of work, McKinley developed a style of composition that embodied a new American contemporary sound and contributed greatly to the clarinet repertoire. Based on a series of fateful encounters and relationships, McKinley was well positioned to create virtuosic works for clarinet and chamber ensembles, some of which are certain to make an indelible impression on the clarinet community at large.

McKinley was born on December 9, 1938 in New Kensington, Pennsylvania to amateur musicians who fostered his musical aptitude from a young age. He quickly developed much faster than they could have anticipated. An evening at home would include his mother improvising hymns and dances on their piano, and his father singing vaudeville tunes and jingles long into the night. McKinley’s earliest musical influences came from these memories, and evenings around the family radio.¹

His first musical heroes were jazz musicians. Listening to the radio and admiring the artistry of the musicians such as John Costa, Joe Negri, Fred Rogers, and others, McKinley decided he wanted to be a jazz musician.² His parents and stepfather were all incredibly supportive and provided drum and piano lessons. While he learned fundamentals from a local piano teacher, he developed an ear and aptitude

¹ William Thomas McKinley, interview by Ev Grimes, Reading, MA, October

² Jeffrey S. Sposato, *William Thomas McKinley: A Bio-Bibliography* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1995), 16.

for jazz and improvisation all on his own. By listening to the great jazz artists of the day and watching his mother each evening, he taught himself to improvise and sight-read.³

By any definition McKinley was a child prodigy. In a few short years he was able to improvise entire pieces in any style in a single sitting. With a burgeoning talent and obsessive practice, by age nine he was performing most nights of the week at dance clubs in downtown Pittsburg. By age eleven he earned a spot in the national musicians' union, known today as the American Federation of Musicians.⁴ His small town in Pennsylvania could hardly keep up with his talent.

Fast-forward several years to 1956 and we find eighteen-year-old "Tom" preparing for college auditions. With his heart set on following in the footsteps of jazz musician John Costa, McKinley auditioned at Carnegie Mellon University as a classical pianist. He had done his due diligence during his teens and studied with several Carnegie Mellon graduates, trying to pave a sure way to success. Instead of building his confidence, McKinley stated this time period was the origin of his "Jekyll & Hyde" conflict.⁵ He had a deep passion for jazz and classical music, but did not know how to properly reconcile his love of jazz music with the world of classical music. This led to an inner conflict between music he enjoyed, jazz, and music he felt commanded more respect, classical.⁶

³ William Thomas McKinley, October 4, 1986, Yale University American Music Oral History Series, 10.

⁴ Sposato, *McKinley*, 8.

⁵ Sposato, *McKinley*, 16.

⁶ Raymond S. Tuttle, "Defining Success for Himself: William Thomas McKinley and MMC Recordings," *Fanfare, the Magazine for Serious Record Collectors* 28 (March 2005): 33.

During his audition at Carnegie Mellon, he could feel his insecurity overpower him. He sat to play his prepared pieces, but soon sensed the audition panel losing interest. In an effort to salvage the performance, he turned to Leonard Eisner, the head of the piano department at the time, and offered to play something different: “I can do something else...I can make up anything.”⁷ Eisner humored the offer and allowed the bold claim to play out. The panel was immediately enraptured for the next fifteen minutes by the boisterous work that possessed the vocabulary and style of the great French composer, Maurice Ravel.⁸ For the first time, and possibly only time in the university’s history, a student was accepted with this wildly unorthodox audition. He was accepted into Leonard Eisner’s studio as a piano major for his outstanding skill as a pianist and also his unparalleled promise as a composer.

Composition faculty member Nikolai Lopatnikoff was soon contacted and informed about the talented young McKinley. Until this moment, McKinley had not considered the path of a composer.⁹ With one simple conversation, Leonard Eisner was able to abate McKinley’s internal conflict of classical music versus jazz. His new path as a composer would eventually lead him to marry the various styles, vocabularies, and spontaneity of jazz with the forms and structures of classical music. With this process, he joined the ranks of other great composers who were already taking jazz idioms and bringing them to classical performance stages. Jazz was no longer music just for dancing, but was becoming regarded with respect and worth.

⁷ Sposato, *McKinley*, 4.

⁸ William Thomas McKinley, October 4, 1986, Yale University American Music Oral History Series, 35.

⁹ Robert Schulslaper, “William Thomas McKinley: Searching for Transcendence,” *Fanfare, the Magazine for Serious Record Collectors* 33, no. 4 (March 2010): 39.

McKinley's time at Carnegie Mellon spanned from 1956 to 1960. During this time he began to dabble with his newfound composition trajectory and experimented with different styles, tonalities, and timbres. He was searching for his compositional voice, which in fact did not quite settle until much later in the 1980s. Lopatnikoff gave him a "quintessential foundation in the grand European manner," meaning he taught him traditional counterpoint, orchestration, development, and theory to give him the tools he needed to "speak musically."¹⁰ McKinley poured over scores by J.S. Bach and Béla Bartók ad nauseum. During this period, one can hear the sophistication of his counterpoint, influenced by Bach, and the pointillism and musical vocabulary of Bartók.¹¹

By imitating the great composers from the past, McKinley masterfully learned how to manipulate and develop his compositions. He spent the next several years organizing his musical ideas. Musicologist Jeffery S. Sposato described this period as his "imitation" period, spanning from 1959 to 1964.¹² Immediately after graduating from Carnegie Mellon, McKinley worked as a jazz pianist to support his growing family. With their encouragement he submitted his Trio No. 1 for violin, cello, and piano (1963) to the Tanglewood Music Center for the BMI (Broadcast Music, Inc.) competition, and he won the 1963 BMI prize. He was subsequently awarded a Fromm Fellowship to attend Tanglewood that summer.

The opportunity to attend Tanglewood presented McKinley the chance to meet and study with some of the most influential composers of the day, here he

¹⁰ Sposato, *McKinley*, 5.

¹¹ Gail Coffler, "Interview: William Thomas McKinley." *Perspectives of New Music* 26, no. 2 (Summer 1988): 260.

¹² Sposato, *McKinley*, 16.

initiated a relationship with a new mentor, Gunther Schuller, who would eventually publish some of his works. His time at Tanglewood marked a shift in his compositional style and from 1965 to 1980, McKinley embarked on a new journey, considered his atonal period by musicologist Jeffrey Sposato.¹³ This would later be considered his middle period where he began to explore and challenge rhythmic freedom. His middle period included his years at Yale as a graduate student where he studied with Mel Powell and met his lifelong collaborator, clarinetist Richard Stoltzman. Mel Powell would become a mentor and a father figure to McKinley. This period is the basis for the topic of my first McKinley recital, “The Influential and Mentoring Figures of William Thomas McKinley.”

In the following chapters I will outline various aspects of McKinley’s life and career. Chapter Two explores the music of McKinley’s teachers and mentors. Aaron Copland’s ability to capture the sound of a culture, Mel Powell’s diversity and jazz influences, Gunther Schuller’s complexity and virtuosic demands, and Lukas Foss’s humor all left their mark on McKinley’s compositional style. Chapter Three covers a diverse survey of McKinley works showing his range and growth as a composer, exploring the trajectory of his career and the development of his vocabulary and artistic voice. Chapter Four covers duos, his clarinet Concerto No. 2, and his Sonata for clarinet. Those most familiar with his body of work consider these two works to be his greatest for clarinet, and they expect to see these canonized in the clarinet repertoire.

¹³ Tuttle, “William Thomas McKinley and MMC Recordings,” 31.

PROGRAM FOR RECITAL NO. 1

Clarinet Sonata.....Aaron Copland (1900–1990)

I *Andante semplice*

II *Lento*

III *Allegretto giusto*

Andrew Welch, piano

Divertimento for Five Winds.....Mel Powell (1923–1998)

I *Allegro cantabile*

II *Presto*

III *Largo*

IV *Vivo*

Michael Homme, oboe, Yongus Clark, flute

Luke Spence, trumpet, Qun Ren, bassoon

-Intermission-

A Trio Setting.....Gunther Schuller (1925–2015)

I Fast and Explosive

II Slow and Dreamy

III *Allegretto scherzando e leggiero*

IV *Molto agitato*

Sarah Park, violin

Summer Xia, piano

Tashi..... Lukas Foss (1922–2009)

I *Lento*

II *Allegro*

III *Lento*

IV *Allegro comodo*

Sarah Park & Phoebe Suzuki, violins

Sinan Wang, viola, Katie McCarthy, cello

Andrew Welch, piano

Chapter 2: The Influential and Mentoring Figures of William Thomas McKinley

McKinley had several mentors who aided his musical development and his journey as a professional musician. With the guidance of some of the most prolific American composers in the twentieth century, including Aaron Copland, Gunther Schuller, Mel Powell, and Lukas Foss, he would eventually find his voice as a jazz-inspired composer, and their influence and proximity would open doors to solidify his career.

Aaron Copland, one of the most iconic American composers, captured the American spirit and landscape in his compositions. Copland's Clarinet Sonata was transcribed by the composer himself in the late 1970s from his Violin Sonata No. 1, written in the 1940s. The transcribed version for clarinet has one distinctive feature that distinguishes it from the original: Copland transposed the key of the work down a major third from D to B-flat. Other than this, the work contains only a few minor changes in register placement. The three-movement work contains all of the quintessential sounds and timbres of Copland.

The first movement starts with open, slow moving harmonies producing long melodic lines that evoke the expansive plains of the Midwest. As the work unfolds, Copland's melodies and influences display jaunty dance rhythms reminiscent of his ballets such as *Rodeo* and *Billy the Kid*. Written in typical ABABA form, the hymn-like folk-style melodies return often, allowing the clarinet tone to highlight the melodic line with each note organically phrasing to the next.

The second movement is slow and homophonic, a simple waltz preceded and followed by a lyrical dialogue between clarinet and piano. At its climax, the

movement rises to a *forte* and the melodic lines develop into a three-part canon, relaxing as the clarinet recalls the opening theme. This movement possesses understated simplicity, and possibly offers an intimate glimpse into Copland's personal grief at the time of the composition.¹⁴

The final movement reimagines the jaunty, dance rhythms of the first movement with a rustic Allegretto giusto. It is a fast romp of bouncy rhythmic themes and textures, that teeters between eloquent lyricism and raucous rhythms and motifs. The two ideas, one staccato and jagged and the other lyrical and flowing, are cleverly juxtaposed here with the combination of various contrasting ideas recreating the bustle of a busy American city. The movement unravels after several minutes of zany rhythms and simple ideas, weaving a tapestry of musical cacophony. Fragmented phrases from the first movement bring the work to a close with the clarinet displaying moments of repose, briefly interrupted by humorous dance rhythms in the piano.¹⁵

Mel Powell was a Pulitzer Prize winning American composer from New York City. Similar to McKinley, his origins in music are rooted in jazz and he worked as a jazz pianist early on in his career. Powell spent three years in the U. S. Army Air Force during World War II and held teaching positions for over 40 years at Mannes College of Music, Queens College, Yale University, and California Institute of the Arts. He was also a freelance composer and conductor of scores for documentary films. Strangely enough, he also had a brief stint in semi-professional baseball.

¹⁴ Aaron Copland began composing the Violin Sonata in 1942 and completed it in 1943. Upon completion, he dedicated it to his close friend Lieutenant Harry H. Dunham who died in action in the South Pacific War (1942–1945).

¹⁵ Emma Johnson, liner notes to *Music for Clarinet and Piano*, performed by Emma Johnson and John Lenchon, recorded April 25–27, 2008, Naxos 8.572240, 2009, CD.

In 1969 Powell moved to California and taught at California Institute for the Arts where he founded the music department and served as an educator for over forty years. He was a neo-classicist, a student of Paul Hindemith, and became known for his devotion to art. Many have described him as a composer of “moderation, invention, and economy.”¹⁶ With limited motivic content, he builds large musical structures of whimsical sounds that possess charm and grace.

The Divertimento for Five Winds is a classic representation of Powell’s economical style of composition. The entire work is based on what Powell calls a “pocket,” or a small grouping of notes. These motifs are constructed from intervals of a second, a fourth, a minor third, and provide the basis for all the melodic material in the piece. On the surface the orchestration seems to be a traditional woodwind quintet, but Powell substitutes a trumpet in the place of a French horn. The change in color that the trumpet creates is unique to Powell, and creates a triumphant and bold sound.

The work begins with a singing first movement that is “economical” with no wasted motion or extraneous material. The charm and loveliness is rooted in Powell’s ability to compose with technical and logical efficiency. The second movement is an impish presto that features virtuosic lines in both the flute and trumpet throughout contrasting highly articulated ideas with simple lyricism. Musical material is controlled and budgeted so as not to produce overly superfluous lines. The third movement is a warm and melancholy Lento with initial thematic material being concise but somehow also enriched, and contrasted during the course of the entire

¹⁶ Yehudi Wyner, liner notes for *Chamber Music*, performed by Fairfield Wind Ensemble and Murray Karpilovsky, CRI 121, 1958, LP.

composition. The final movement, *Vivo*, features more virtuosic figures from the flute and charming melodies from the oboe.¹⁷ It ends with a quaint and unobtrusive coda with thoughtfulness in every note.

Composer Gunther Schuller was the most tangibly influential to McKinley's career, publishing many of his works and influencing the frenetic melodies and complex rhythmic style characteristic of his middle period. Schuller's language was similar to McKinley's, with many virtuosic and seemingly inhuman demands placed on the performers. *A Trio Setting* was commissioned by the Verdehr Trio, a chamber group comprised of violinist Walter Verdehr, clarinetist Elsa Ludewig-Verdehr, and pianist Gary Kirkpatrick. The Verdehr Trio found their niche commissioning new works to expand the repertoire for their instrumentation.

Schuller described *A Trio Setting* as a virtuosic *tour de force* with its form firmly rooted in classical construction.¹⁸ It possesses four movements with contrasting tempi: fast, slow, scherzo, fast, with the first movement primarily highlighting the virtuosity of the clarinetist with frenzied lines and moments of jazz grooves that provide stability for listeners. The second movement is a striking contrast set dramatically slower and written more lyrically. Performers exchange beautiful melodies that are "very quiet, very contemplative, and very almost distant sounding, and very inner directed."¹⁹ The third movement is the scherzo, a rhythmically complex but light movement. The rhythms eventually lead to the

¹⁷ Wyner, liner notes for *Chamber Music*.

¹⁸ Wyner, liner notes for *Chamber Music*.

¹⁹ Gunther Schuller, quoted in Martin Bookspan, host, *The Making of a Medium*, WKAR-TV, 1990–1993, posted on February 7, 2017, accessed November 16, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S4aZTFXICWU>.

andante in the middle of the work, after which the movement finally recapitulates back to the rhythmic caterwauling from the opening. The final movement is structurally the densest. It opens with wild lines and leaps, but, as in the third movement, it calms to a slow moving 6/4, only to recapitulation and end in a dramatic frenzy.²⁰

Lukas Foss was a German-American composer, pianist, and conductor; he worked with McKinley throughout his career, and was a close friend. Foss conducted many of McKinley's works and solo premieres with clarinetist Richard Stoltzman, such as his Concerto No. 2, to be discussed further in Chapter Four. The piece *Tashi* is filled with gentle and idiosyncratic humor built on wild melodies and rhythms throughout the work. This piece was jointly commissioned by the string quartet of the same name and premiered at the Kennedy Center.²¹

The work is hardly minimalist, but with short recurring phrases throughout the first movement the references to minimalism are "sometimes direct, sometimes oblique, but nonetheless are hard to miss."²² This style becomes a cornerstone of McKinley's compositional style that he later coins "developing minimalism."²³ Regarding the work's intention and aesthetic Foss says, "I want [the audience] to fall

²⁰ Bookspan, *The Making of a Medium*.

²¹ Lars Helgert, liner notes to *Pieces of Genius*, performed by New York New Music Ensemble, Lois Martin, and Deborah Wong, recorded September 26–27, 2015. Albany Records Troy 1644, 2016, CD.

²² Bernard Holland, "Concert: Lukas Foss is Tashi's Guest Soloist," *The New York Times*, February 22, 1987, 56.

²³ Developing minimalism will be a recurring term in the study of McKinley works. It is his own term he coined to describe the style he develops in his final compositional period. It has the base characteristics of minimalism, with basic repeating themes and harmonies, but develops them throughout a composition more similar to a theme and variations, a form rooted in the spontaneity of improvisation, than precisely measured process.

in love! Not with me, personally, but with my work! . . . It has entertainment in it. There's definitely a fun quality about it. It is full of smiles and puns, and anything can happen at any moment.”²⁴

The work certainly marries virtuosity and entertainment seamlessly. With Foss's expert compositional language and humor there is little not to love in the work's construction. This work opens with solemn repetitive figures and long, delicate strands of violin tone. The second movement breathes a new energy, conjuring an almost dance like feel in the fragmented and wildly orchestrated repetitive phrases. The piece then moves to a pair of clarinet cadenzas that achieve a wavelike flow; the “treadmill” finale flies with floating piano solos, and ends with a spooky disappearance.²⁵

²⁴ Lukas Foss in Max Wilcox, liner notes to *Rendezvous With Tashi*, performed by Tashi, Richard Stoltzman, Lukas Foss, recorded April 28, 1987, RCA Victor Red Seal 7901-2-RC, 1989, CD.

²⁵ Wilcox, liner notes to *Rendezvous With Tashi*.

PROGRAM FOR RECITAL NO. 2

For One (1971) William Thomas McKinley (1938–2015)

Mostly Blues (2000) William Thomas McKinley

I

VI

VIII

XI

XVIII

XIX

XX

XXI

Lauren Floyd, marimba

-Intermission-

Two romances: for violin, clarinet, piano (1984) William Thomas McKinley

I *Moderato*

II *Allegro Fantastico*

Mason Yu, violin

Andrew Welch, piano

Intermezzo No. 1 (1983)..... William Thomas McKinley

Andrew Welch, piano

Intermezzo No.2 (1983)..... William Thomas McKinley

Andrew Welch, piano

Chapter 3: An Overview of William Thomas McKinley

During William Thomas McKinley's career he wrote for a menagerie of instruments, ensembles, and soloists due to high volumes of assorted commissions and grant projects. He was in high demand and frequently had multiple projects and commissions at any given time. This chapter shows his diverse musical vocabulary, and the varied mediums for which he composed for as a result of his commissions and collaborations. This workload made diversity and flexibility a part of his style.

For One was written in 1971 during McKinley's atonal period. This was a time where he explored wild rhythmic freedom both in notation and meter. The composer says of his work, "the prime content of the work is emotional in origin. It captures a single extemporaneous outburst as if improvised, and yet with a sense of inevitable organic growth from idea to idea."²⁶ He desired to create the sensation of a singular "virtuosic melismatic unending melody."²⁷

McKinley and Stoltzman met during their time at Yale and quickly developed deep respect for each other's skill and work ethic. This carried over into their professional lives where their strongest collaborations began. The two collaborated on more than twenty works, many of which are still manuscripts and were never sent to a publisher. McKinley dedicated many of his works to Stoltzman including *For One*. During their fifty-year working relationship they became close friends. McKinley was enamored with Stoltzman's performance style and personality and always had this in

²⁶ William Thomas McKinley, quoted in Carter Harman, liner notes, *McKinley Zupko*, "Paintings VII, For One," directed by Frank Epstein, conducted by Gunther Schuller, recorded with Collage. CRI SD 507, 1984. LP.

²⁷ Harman, liner notes, *McKinley Zupko*.

mind when he composed for him. Stoltzman made the first and only recording of this work in 1987 as a result of a grant awarded from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters Award.

For One contains all of the defining characteristics of McKinley's atonal period. The work is full of clear sequences and motivic material with repeated melodies, virtuosic cadenzas, and larger than life dynamics. The rhythm is free and chaotic with infrequent meter markings, often times with an X substituted for a time signature (see figure 1). The tempos vacillate between very fast with indiscernible tempo changes (i.e., eighth note = 156, sixteenth = 240, and dotted eighth = 46) to as slow as quarter note = 30. McKinley uses extended grace note passages that border on cadenzas. In addition the work is stylized with extreme dynamics and articulation markings, oftentimes going from extreme *pianissimo* to quadruple *forte* within the same line of music. This type of writing is pervasive throughout all of his compositions. McKinley's obsessive interpretive markings can appear as often as two or three per beat.



Figure 1: Selection of engraved score for William Thomas McKinley, *For One*. (MMC) 1971.

The reception of this work was mixed. One clarinetist, Richard Nunemaker was so deeply touched by the recording of Stoltzman that he contacted McKinley to acquire this piece and several others. Nunemaker eventually toured Austria and recorded one of McKinley's larger chamber works where clarinet doubles soprano

saxophone, *Golden Petals*.²⁸ He stated, “[*For*] *One* is a masterpiece. Absolutely breathtaking and intricate.”²⁹ Others such as Daniel Leeson, music reviewer for the International Clarinet Association (ICA) left biting remarks about the music and recording. His review published in the ICA’s quarterly journal read as follows:

A difficult work whose musical content in my opinion, is not worth the effort one must put into bringing it off. The technical demands are unceasing: wide leaps, extreme dynamic range, quarter tones, fistfuls of notes, fast tongue, complex rhythms, strange musical notation, flutter-tongue (I think); in short, everything!! . . . Requests by the composer border on the absurd; three notes in a passage not more than one second long to be played “introspective;” does one look downward wistfully in order to project this emotion?; a series of minor 9th leaps downward repeated for what seems like forever and played “con calore” in that is essentially a sterile and antiseptic passage; very unmusical, angular, confused passages to be played “with intense passion and lyricism.”³⁰

We gather that Leeson found the work less than pleasing; and an unmusical homage to atonal works.

By 1991, McKinley had found his voice and settled into a vastly different style of writing. He had finally put his inner conflict of jazz versus classical style behind him, and learned to reconcile his love of jazz music with the more traditional world of classical music. In his duo *Mostly Blues* (2000), he composes a series of short duets for clarinet and marimba, dedicated again to his friend Richard Stoltzman and his wife Mika Stoltzman (see fig. 2).³¹

²⁸ Richard Nunemaker, phone interview by author, May 1, 2018.

²⁹ Nunemaker, interview.

³⁰ Daniel Leeson, “Review of ‘For One,’” *The Clarinet* 9, no. 1 (Fall 1981): 49. According to Leeson, the only redeeming quality of this work was the print-type. “Dark black notes against bright white paper.”

³¹ Richard Stoltzman, interview by author, Boston, MA, August 19, 2018. Mika Stoltzman is a marimbist and Richard Stoltzman’s second and current wife. They are both still active performers and still tour together. They have a CD of select McKinley works due to be released in June 2019.

In these duets, listeners will hear how McKinley moved away from long, single movement works and transitioned into shorter, dramatic multi-movement works. These duets are a series of short character pieces, each movement nameless and without style markings at the beginning. The duets in this collection explore the blues, samba, repetitive meditative ideas, and juxtapositions of sweet melodies and aggressive and turbulent phrases.

On the cusp of McKinley's neo-tonality, he composed *Two Romances*: for Violin, Clarinet and Piano in 1984 and dedicated it to Richard Stoltzman, Lucy Stoltzman, and Richard Goode.³² *Two Romances* opens with a seemingly serene movement with a repetitive piano motif underneath a melancholy, unison melody in the clarinet and violin. The nostalgic melodies quickly turn into joyful bubbling phrases with cascading arpeggios and highly articulated, rapid sixteenth notes, a stark contrast to the long languid opening phrases. The second movement is more raucous and frenetic, with stormy and forceful themes. It is linear with dense polyphony.

Two Romances is "sometimes wistful, and sometimes turbulent," a perfect description of McKinley's compositional style.³³ He wrote in a way that matched his larger-than-life personality. His music is full of extremes of every kind including extreme louds and softs, tempi from very fast to very slow, and articulations with aggressive accents and delicate legatos. All of his works stretch the performer to find the farthest reaches of their interpretive ability. Musicians must have complete control

³² Lucy Stoltzman was Richard Stoltzman's first wife and chamber partner for many years during their early careers. The trio with the two Stoltzman's and Richard Good received a Grammy nomination for their recording of Bartók, Stravinsky, and Ives during their long chamber collaboration.

³³ James Wierzbicki, "Synchonia's Quiet Rock Scores with the Real Thing," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, September 16, 1987, 86.

of their instrument and possess the insight to weave phrases together in a way that tells a story to make sense of the interpretive markings and the minutia of these works. Taking a step back to view the larger phrases and pacing of the piece is key, and at times less intuitive in these pieces.

Intermezzo No. 1 & No. 2 were written in 1983 as a commission for the National Endowment for the Arts. They were both premiered by Stoltzman and Thomas Stumpf on May 3, 1983 in Jordan Hall at New England Conservatory where both Stoltzman and McKinley taught. Stoltzman wrote the original notes about the intermezzi and McKinley's approach to provide context for the performer and audience:

An intermezzo is unimaginatively defined as a short movement connecting the main part of a composition. But because Tom's life is a composition—imagine barely opening a door, gently, and hearing a song—almost a dream of a song already begun, slowly spinning, beautiful in long breathed simplicity. Imagine listening, almost motionless, the door slightly open, transfixed. Then, slowly, closing the door, hearing the music no more yet feeling it flowing on and on inside you, inside the door. You have heard a moment of McKinley; a brief breeze from the mountain of McKinley's compositional life—an Intermezzo.”³⁴

These two works, while composed at the same time, are no more alike than the piano is to the clarinet. The first is lyrical and languid while the second is passionate and energetic. After a performance at NEC Richard Buell of *The Boston Globe* said, “the two intermezzi for clarinet and piano got a lot of mileage from a mere handful of melodic and rhythmic gestures, but they were the right gestures.”³⁵

³⁴ Sposato, *McKinley*, 134.

³⁵ Richard Buell, “Enchanted Circle Series Celebrates 10 Years at NEC,” *The Boston Globe*, December 4, 1986, 98.

Mostly Blues

William McKinley

I.

$\text{♩} = 84$

B♭ Clarinet
transposed

Marimba

mp *p* *sim.* *fz* *p* *mp*

mp *p* *p* *p* *p*

mp *p* *p* *p* *p*

PROGRAM FOR RECITAL NO. 3

Clarinet Duets Book One (2007) ... William Thomas McKinley (1938–2015)

- I
- II
- III
- IV
- V
- VI

Dane Clark, clarinet

Concerto No. 2 (1990)..... William Thomas McKinley

- I *Allegro con drastico e tempestoso*
- II *Andantino*
- III *Prestissimo e Vivace*

Andrew Welch, piano

-Intermission-

Sonata for Clarinet and Piano (1986)..... William Thomas McKinley

- I *Andantino*
- II *Scherzando*
- III *Largo*
- IV *Maestoso*

Andrew Welch, piano

Chapter 4: Masterworks and Duos

This final chapter explores more works for two instruments. Over the course of his career, McKinley wrote over two-dozen solo and chamber works for clarinet that range in style from his highly rhythmic, atonal works to quasi-minimalistic works. Both his highly emotional concerto and the sonata blur the boundaries of classical music and jazz and were a focal point of my last recital. Musicologist Jeffrey Sposato, the composer's son Elliot McKinley, and multiple soloists have all spoken to the beauty and accessibility of his Concerto No. 2 for Clarinet and his Clarinet Sonata.

All interviewed artists and musicologists unanimously agree on the strength of these works. The quality of the writing could easily lend itself to the canonization of these works in the clarinet repertoire. By grouping his clarinet duos (and also *Mostly Blues*) in a series of books, he follows in the footsteps of composers such as J.S. Bach in creating practical studies of many of his duo works, a further canonization of his output.

Clarinet Duos books 1 & 2 were commissioned by Kim Ellis, professor at Lamar University and Michelle Gingras professor at Miami University in Ohio. Each professor recorded one book with Stoltzman: Book 1 by Michelle Gingras, and Book 2 by Kim Ellis. The first book is a series of six contrasting duos. The first duet is a slow quasi-canonic movement with a repeating four bar theme that trades between the two clarinet parts. The only exception is measures 15–16 where the secondary lilting triplet melody is played, almost as an ornamentation of the theme. It has a developing melody that progressively gets higher in tessitura along with an octave displacement

of the main theme as the clarinets approach the final cadence, a unison concert D. The second duo is a more raucous duo with rising and falling arpeggios, and a brief moment of a soaring melody, all offset by three beats. In the middle we are interrupted by repeated parallel intervals *a la* the Poulenc Clarinet Duo Sonata only to be interrupted again by several fragmented melodies and motifs all offset by one and a half to half a beat.

The third movement raises the stakes, with a *Rhapsody in Blue* like glissando that bends all the way into the altissimo. This movement is also a balance of slightly offset melodies contrasting with direct unison lines that vacillate between broad lines and short, accented leaping phrases. The fourth movement is a jaunty exercise; it is the most repetitive and best example of McKinley's self-titled "developing minimalism." The main theme repeats throughout the movement, with sporadic iterations being embellished to imitate an improvisation. Measure 37 makes a sudden flurry of ascending thirds followed by a sudden relaxation of the texture. A fragment of the main theme gradually brings the whole movement to a more relaxed and natural cadence.

The fifth movement grooves in a 5/4 meter and find both clarinets in unison throughout. An occasional moment of phasing between the duo ends with a raucous ascending scale punctuated by a syncopated cadential figure. The sixth and final movement brings the energy and emotion of the collection full circle to a relaxed, melancholy canon. It begins to develop after its second full statement of the melody when the first clarinet part rises in tessitura, ascending to an altissimo G, leaving a two octave spread between the voices.

The Concerto No. 2 was a commission by Stoltzman, Larry Combs, former Principal Clarinet of the Chicago Symphony, and Michelle Zukovsky, former Principal Clarinet of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.³⁶ The first and third movements are feverish with contrasting highly articulated and arpeggiated passages with lengthy melodic passages (see fig. 3). They seem to be unceasing in their demands of loud, clipped, and articulated passages. This first movement is dramatic and ends with a classical *Rhapsody in Blue* style glissando. The second movement is slow and bluesy, accentuating the clarinets flexibility and idiomatic jazz aptness with bends, vibrato, and an extremely large registrar range. The third movement is virtuosic and places great demands on the performer with difficult technical passages, rapid wide leaps, and huge character changes. This final movement is untamed and wild with significant dynamic contrast over a mere handful of beats. Aggressive articulations pervade this movement, adding to its larger-than-life character and stylistic demand.

The clarinet Sonata was written and performed in 1986 by Stoltzman during McKinley's "developing minimalism" period (see fig. 4). In this period, McKinley's compositions centered on tonality and repetition. The repetition provides a framework that his audiences can grasp, and the variations inspired by improvisation creates a more accessible experience for the audience. In many ways, the digression from atonal and academic works (such as the unaccompanied piece *For One*) to more popular jazz and minimalist styles is where he found his voice. Music from his atonal period was excellent to study and discuss in academic circles, but he considered it

³⁶ Sposato, *McKinley*, 75.

“less enjoyable” to listen to.³⁷ His academic works would often be premiered but seldom performed. This new period was where he perfected his “developing minimalism.”

The clarinet Sonata is a multi-movement work considered his “most ambitious sonata [embracing] a wide gamut of emotional contrasts, juxtapositions of color, and musical sentiment- all ambitiously developed and amply canvassed throughout the large-framed movements.”³⁸ In it, McKinley presents simple themes and motives in sequences within a traditional western tonal framework. Each movement develops and evolves, but never strays far from the main theme. The first movement’s simple melody is continually returning after moments of improvisatory inspired bursts. The second movement is a scherzando with a driving rhythm always propelling it forward. Littered with small fragments reminiscent of jazz riffs and improvisation, this movement is unceasing. In contrast, the third movement is melancholy with a yearning and pristine melody in the clarinet with clear, open harmonies in the piano. It starts with a sweet descending line in the piano that melds into the pianissimo melody in the clarinet, then grows in dynamic and rises in tessitura over several bars, foreshadowing the upcoming extreme dynamics and characters we expect from McKinley’s compositions. In the middle of the work, the clarinet line transforms from a simple melody to a cascading fifteen-note figure with arpeggiated chords and scales. The dynamics rise and climax with the altissimo of the clarinet and massive chords in the piano, then slowly unwinds back to a subdued pianissimo melody in the clarinet. The fourth and final movement is a joyous minimalistic movement with

³⁷ Schulslaper, “Searching for Transcendence,” 41.

³⁸ Sposato, *McKinley*, 136.

rhythmic drive and an unceasing piano part.³⁹ The driving melody is frequently interrupted with flurries of notes, almost as if the line was interrupting itself. It is highly influenced by improvisation, making the development of the line seem to be an unfolding in real time. It ends with yet another clarinet glissando, bending and reaching into the highest heights and loudest dynamics for both instruments.

Every artist interviewed for this project has described William Thomas McKinley's music as larger than life. His music matched his kind-hearted and generous personality, always laughing and trying to somehow capture the music that seemed to be swirling around him at all times. The Concerto No. 2 and clarinet Sonata are prime examples of the emotional riches one must possess to truly play his music to its fullest potential.

³⁹ Sposato, *McKinley*, 136.

Clarinet Concerto No. 2William Thomas McKinley
Piano reduction by Joe Clark*Piano Reduction Commissioned by Melissa Morales*

I.
Allegro con drastico e tempestoso ($\text{♩} = 120$)

The image displays a sample page of the engraved score for William Thomas McKinley's *Clarinet Concerto No. 2*, Movement I. The tempo is marked "Allegro con drastico e tempestoso" with a quarter note equal to 120 beats per minute. The score is arranged for Clarinet in Bb, Piano, Bb Clarinet, and Piano. The music is in 4/4 time and features various dynamic markings and articulations. The first system shows the Clarinet in Bb and Piano staves. The second system shows the Bb Clarinet and Piano staves. The third system shows the Bb Clarinet and Piano staves. The score includes markings such as *fff*, *detache e marcatis.*, *sfp*, *fff possible*, *marcatissimo*, *legato*, *poco f*, *f*, *fff possible e feroce*, *sim.*, *sf*, *marc.*, and *legato*. A large "Sample Copy" watermark is overlaid on the page.

Figure 3: Sample page of the engraved score for William Thomas McKinley, *Clarinet Concerto No. 2*, Allegro con drastico e tempestoso (Subito: publication forthcoming), 1.

III. (ca. 5')

[illegible]

Figure 4: Sample page of the engraved score for William Thomas McKinley, *Clarinet Sonata*, Largo (Subito: publication forthcoming), 36.

Track Listing for Disc #1

Aaron Copland (1900–1990)

Clarinet Sonata

TRACK 01: *Andante semplice*

TRACK 02: *Lento*

TRACK 03: *Allegretto giusto*

Mel Powell (1923–1998)

Divertimento for Five Winds

TRACK 04: *Allegro cantabile*

TRACK 05: *Presto*

TRACK 06: *Largo*

TRACK 07: *Vivo*

Gunther Schuller (1925–2015)

A Trio Setting

TRACK 08: Fast and Explosive

TRACK 09: Slow and Dreamy

TRACK 10: Allegretto scherzando e leggiero

TRACK 11: Molto agitato

Lukas Foss (1922–2009)

Tashi

TRACK 12: *Lento*

TRACK 13: *Allegro*

TRACK 14: *Lento*

TRACK 15: *Allegro comodo*

Supporting Instrumentalists:

Sarah Park & Phoebe Suzuki, violins

Andrew Welch & Summer Xia, pianos

Sinan Wang, viola,

Katie McCarthy, cello

Michael Homme, oboe

Yongus Clark, flute

Luke Spence, trumpet

Qun Ren, bassoon

Recorded live on December 7, 2018 in Gildenhorn Recital Hall

University of Maryland, School of Music, College Park, MD

Recorded and Mastered by Antonino d’Urzo, Opusrite™

Track Listing for Disc #2

William Thomas McKinley (1938–2015)

TRACK 01: *For One* (1971)

Mostly Blues (2000)

TRACK 02: I

TRACK 03: VI

TRACK 04: VIII

TRACK 05: XI

TRACK 06: XVIII

TRACK 07: XIX

TRACK 08: XX

TRACK 09: XXI

Two romances: for violin, clarinet, piano (1984)

TRACK 10: *Moderato*

TRACK 11: *Allegro Fantastico*

TRACK 12: Intermezzo No. 1 (1983)

TRACK 13: Intermezzo No.2 (1983)

Supporting Instrumentalists:

Lauren Floyd, marimba

Mason Yu, violin

Andrew Welch, piano

Recorded live on April 19, 2019 in Leah Smith Recital Hall
University of Maryland, School of Music, College Park, MD
Recorded by Ria Yang

Track Listing for Disc #3

William Thomas McKinley (1938–2015)

Clarinet Duets Book One (2007)

TRACK 01: I

TRACK 02: II

TRACK 03: III

TRACK 04: IV

TRACK 05: V

TRACK 06: VI

Concerto No. 2 (1990)

TRACK 07: *Allegro con drammatico e tempestoso*

TRACK 08: *Andantino*

TRACK 09: *Prestissimo e Vivace*

Sonata for Clarinet and Piano (1986)

TRACK 10: *Andantino*

TRACK 11: *Scherzando*

TRACK 12: *Largo*

TRACK 13: *Maestoso*

Supporting Instrumentalists:

Dane Clark, clarinet

Andrew Welch, piano

Recorded live on May 4, 2019 in Ulrich Recital Hall
University of Maryland, School of Music, College Park, MD
Recorded by Robert DiLutis

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S4aZTFXICWU>.

A television series based on the Verdehr Trio which documents their development of the chamber music trio for violin-clarinet-piano trio. It features six commissioned works as well as interviews with the composers.

Coffler, Gail. "Interview: William Thomas McKinley." *Perspectives of New Music* 26, no. 2 (Summer 1988): 254–71.

Interview between Gail Coffler and McKinley regarding his approach to composition and the people who perform his work.

Helgert, Lars. Liner notes to *Pieces of Genius*. Performed by New York New Music Ensemble, Lois Martin, and Deborah Wong. Recorded September 26–27, 2015. Albany Records Troy 1644, 2016. CD.

Liner notes for CD featuring Lukas Foss's work *Tashi* with the New York New Music Ensemble and Jean Kupperud.

Johnson, Emma. Liner notes to *Music for Clarinet and Piano*. Performed by Emma Johnson and John Lenehan. Recorded April 25–27, 2008. Naxos 8.572240, 2009. CD.

Liner notes written by Emma Johnson about the clarinet sonatas of Aaron Copland, Leonard Bernstein, and Sir John Dankworth.

Kupperud, Jean. Phone interview by author. April 22, 2018.

Phone interview between author and clarinet soloist Jean Kupperud, colleague and performer of William Thomas McKinley's works. She commissioned several works by McKinley and he dedicated many to her.

Leeson, Daniel. "Review of *For One*." *The Clarinet* 9, no. 1 (Fall 1981): 49.

Review of William Thomas McKinley's piece *For One* recorded by Richard Stoltzman.

McKinley, Elliot Miles. Email correspondence with author. February 22, 2018.

A series of emails and correspondence between author and the composer's son discussing some of the intricacies of his work.

McKinley, Elliot Miles. Interview by author. Boston, MA. August 21, 2018.

Interview between author and Elliot McKinley, son of William Thomas McKinley regarding his father's works, philosophies, and specific works.

McKinley, William Thomas. Comprehensive Application. 1983. Official Records of the American Composers Alliance, Box 14, Folder 26. Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library, University of Maryland, College Park, MD.

A copy McKinley's application into the ACA complete with letters of recommendation from Gunther Schuller and Richard Stoltzman.

McKinley, William Thomas. Interview by Ev Grimes. Reading, MA. October 4, 1986. Yale University American Music Oral History Series.

Transcript of an interview between Ev Grimes and William Thomas McKinley archived in the Yale series Oral History of American Music.

McKinley, William Thomas. Quoted in Carter Harman. Liner notes. *McKinley Zupko*. "Paintings VII, For One." Directed by Frank Epstein. Conducted by Gunther Schuller. Recorded with Collage. CRI SD 507, 1984. LP.

Liner notes from the original LP recording of McKinley's works *Paintings VII* and *For One*.

Murdock, Katherine. Interview by author. College Park, MD. May 9, 2018.

Interview between author and violist Katherine Murdock, dissertation committee member and friend of the composer who performed several McKinley premiers with her ensembles during her career in Boston.

Nunemaker, Richard. Phone interview by author. May 1, 2018.

Phone conversation between author and Richard Nunemaker, colleague and performer of William Thomas McKinley's works.

Reel, James. "MMC Presents Richard Stoltzman in 4 New Works by 3 Composers." *Fanfare the Magazine for Serious Record Collectors* 30, no. 4 (March 2007): 20–5.

The article reports on MMC Recordings' release of clarinetist Richard Stoltzman's recording of compositions by William Thomas McKinley, Jonathan Sacks and Roger Davidson, with each composer commenting on Stoltzman's performance.

Schulslager, Robert. "William Thomas McKinley: Searching for Transcendence."

Fanfare, the Magazine for Serious Record Collectors 33, no. 4 (March 2010): 34–44.

The article focuses on composer William Thomas McKinley who embraced jazz with proficiency and enthusiasm. It mentions that he continually seeks to expand the musical boundaries without abandoning the basic elements of rhythm, melody and harmony.

Sposato, Jeffrey S. *William Thomas McKinley: A Bio-Bibliography*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1995.

A brief biography of William Thomas McKinley based on interviews with McKinley and his wife, and a complete catalogue of his works, program notes, recording records, and premiere information up until 1995.

Stoltzman, Richard. Interview by author. Boston, MA. August 19, 2018.

Interview between author and Richard Stoltzman, soloist and friend of William Thomas McKinley for over fifty years. Discussion covered details on several of McKinley's works, some manuscripts, recordings, and insights to McKinley's personality and body of work.

Tuttle, Raymond S. "Defining Success for Himself: William Thomas McKinley and MMC Recordings." *Fanfare, the Magazine for Serious Record Collectors* 28 (March 2005): 28, 30–5.

Interview between Raymond Tuttle and William Thomas McKinley on his career after retiring from NEC and engaging solely in composing.

Wilcox, Max. Liner notes to *Rendezvous With Tashi*. Performed by Tashi, Richard Stoltzman, Lukas Foss. Recorded April 28, 1987. RCA Victor Red Seal 7901-2-RC, 1989. CD.

Liner notes from CD *Rendezvous With Tashi* about Lukas Foss's work *Tashi* performed by the string quartet of the same name and Richard Stoltzman.

Wyner, Yehudi. Liner notes for *Chamber Music*. Performed by Fairfield Wind Ensemble and Murray Karpilovsky. CRI 121, 1958. LP.

Liner notes from the CD *Chamber Music* featuring works by Mel Powell with the only known recording of *Divertimento for Five Winds*.

Zagorski, William. "On the Building of Pipelines: William Thomas McKinley and the Master Musicians Collective." *Fanfare, the Magazine for Serious Record Collectors* 17, no. 2 (1993): 116–31.

Article detailing William Thomas McKinley's recording company Master Musicians Collective, its mission, and the significance of Richard Stoltzman to McKinley's career.

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